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Don't ban the CIA recruiters

SHOULD THE Central Intelligence Agency be barred from recruiting students on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus?

To say "yes" has a lot of appeal to citizens genuinely concerned about the militarism running rampant in this nation and about the CIA's proclivity for getting involved in dirty tricks abroad. While much of the work the CIA does is routine intelligence gathering around the world, it all too often gets involved in toppling governments that the political leaders of this country find offensive.

There is ample reason to be skeptical of what the CIA is up to and to demand tough congressional oversight of the spy agency's actions.

Other issues are at stake on campus, though. Some students on the Madison campus would like to work for the CIA. For the university to

bar the CIA from recruiting on campus would deny those students an opportunity the university provides to students seeking other careers.

A university, after all, is a diverse institution. While its sole purpose is not to turn out products for the job market, that is one function it serves in our society. For a public institution to shut out one bona fide employer — one that is an agency of the government — chips away at the diversity that makes a university a vibrant institution.

IF THE CIA continues to recruit here, opponents of the agency can use the occasion — as they have so well in the past — to educate the community at large about the misdeeds of the spy agency.

To ban the agency limits freedom, and that ought to be done only with the greatest hesitation.